



Date: August 7, 2006
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BILLINGS – The following fire restrictions and closures currently are in place for central and eastern Montana.

STAGE 1 RESTRICTIONS apply to all state lands and private lands lying within the boundaries of Hill, Blaine, Phillips, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, Chouteau, Judith Basin, Fergus, Petroleum, Wheatland, and Golden Valley counties and to all federal lands in these counties except the Lewis & Clark National Forest. All land within a city boundary is exempted. Under Stage 1 restrictions, campfires are permitted only within developed recreation sites, and smoking is allowed only in areas cleared of flammable materials.

STAGE 1 WITH SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS: The following counties are under Stage 1 with an additional ban on open burning: Dawson, Wibaux, Fallon, McCone, Powder River, Richland, Garfield and Prairie. The following counties are under Stage 1 with an additional ban on campfires: Carter, Custer, and Rosebud.

STAGE 2 RESTRICTIONS: Under Stage 2, open burning, including campfires, is prohibited. Smoking is allowed only in areas cleared of all flammable materials. Motorized vehicles must stay on designated roads and trails. Operating an internal combustion engine, welding, or using explosives is prohibited between 1 p.m. and 1 a.m. An exemption for agriculture harvesting is in effect, but those taking advantage of this exemption are urged to have equipment, including spark arrestors, in good working order. Stage 2 restrictions apply to all lands within the Crow Reservation and Northern Cheyenne Agency and federal, state, and private lands in Treasure, Sweetgrass, Big Horn, Carbon, Musselshell, Stillwater and Yellowstone counties. All lands within a city boundary are exempted.

CLOSURES: Bureau of Land Management lands are closed to motorized vehicle use within the South Hills Motorcycle Area, Acton Recreation Area, and the Shepherd Ah-Nei OHV Area.

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Exemptions for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 include fires fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG, or other activities for which there is a permit or written authorization. However, an exemption does not absolve an individual or organization from liability or responsibility for any fire started by the exempted activity. Anyone who causes a wildland fire intentionally or through negligence will be held accountable for damage and suppression costs.

For more information about fire prevention, please contact the Custer National Forest at 406-657-6200; Bureau of Land Management at 406-896-5013; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation at 406-247-4400; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-247-2940; Carbon County at 406-446-1595; Stillwater County at 406-321-0204; Sweet Grass County at 406-932-5143; or your local fire department or sheriff's office.

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